R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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DISSATISFACTIONS IN TEACHING THE CD CHILD.

BY- GROFF, PATRICK J.

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ACCORDING TO A SURVEY OF 294 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN 16 SCHOOLS SERVING DISADVANTAGED PUPILS, HIGH TEACHER TURNOVER IS PROMPTED BY THE "PECULIARITIES" OF THE DISADVANTAGED STUDENT, BY ADMINISTRATIVE AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEFICIENCIES IN THE SCHOOLS, AND BY THE TEACHERS' OWN SHORTCOMINGS. TO REDUCE THE RATE OF TURNOVER, FOUR EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS ARE SUGGESTED. THEY INCLUDE--(1) REDUCTION OF CLASS SIZE, (2) RECONSTRUCTION OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PROCEDURES, (3) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS WITH DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS, AND (4) JUDICIOUS SELECTION OF TEACHERS ACCORDING TO EXPERIENCE, WILLINGNESS, AND LACK OF PREJUDICE. ALSO, TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES SHOULD TRAIN STUDENTS TO WORK WITH DISADVANTAGED PUPILS. THIS ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED IN THE "PHI DELTA KAPPAN," VOLUME 45, NUMBER 2, NOVEMBER 1963. (LB)

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ment is not for conformity but for compatibility. To make all people uniform would be as impractical as it would be inconsistent with American ideals. *To give all people a fair chance to meet the challenge of life* is both practicable and American. [Italics added]

JACOB Landers, coordinator of New York City's Higher Horizons program, in answer to the question, What makes a successful Higher Horizons school?[11] said:

> No amount of increased appropriations, and no change in procedures or organization, can be effective without a fundamental faith in the ability of the children. It is not enough to know intellectually that Negro and Puerto Rican children can learn as well as other children. It must be felt in the marrow of the bones and in the pit of the stomach.
>
> This belief in the children and pride in their accomplishments must run like a golden thread through the fabric of the school's daily existence. With this feeling, the school poor in services can yet be rich in achievement; without it, the richest services yield but the poorest results.
>
> Our great enemy is the phrase "as well as can be expected." It implies that the school merely reflects the community, but cannot affect it. It implies an acceptance of the *status quo*, rather than a struggle to change it.
>
> The true Higher Horizons program spreads faith in children and hope for their future.

The variety of programs which have been developed illustrates that this faith in children and hope for their future can be expressed and fostered in different ways. There will naturally be questions about the most practicable, economical, and beneficial kind of program to develop in a given community. These questions are embraced by the issues discussed here. Only by confronting these squarely and unequivocally will school districts be able to develop successfully their own programs for disadvantaged pupils.

[11] *Higher Horizons Bulletin*, December, 1962, Board of Education of the City of New York.

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Dissatisfactions in Teaching the CD Child

By PATRICK J. GROFF

THE high rate of teacher turnover in schools that enroll culturally deprived children adds another distressing problem to an already difficult situation. Data are available on the turnover of teachers in general but not on the turnover among teachers of culturally disadvantaged children.

Responses of 294 teachers in sixteen schools serving Negro or Mexican-American "ghettos" in a large city suggest that an important reason for the high turnover is the teacher's own awareness of his inadequacy for this kind of teaching. Many of the teachers who completed this open-ended sentence, "The main reason, in my opinion, for the high turnover among teachers of CD children is . . . ," offered more than one reason, however.

Forty per cent of the responses pointed to "peculiarities" in the personalities of culturally deprived children as the major cause of the dissatisfaction that leads to turnover. Thirty-seven per cent highlighted deficiencies in the administration or organization of the school, while 22 per cent mentioned the shortcomings of the teachers themselves. Problems of discipline or negative behavior, classes that were too large, and lack of understanding and acceptance of deprived children by teachers headed the list of specifics.

The responses of these elementary teachers suggest that to reduce the rate of turnover four improvements are critical. One is the reduction of classes to manageable size. Classes must be small enough to allow the necessary time and space to work with the CD child individually if his work habits, his attitudes toward school, and his social aspirations are to be improved. Second, principals and teachers must reconstruct the curriculum, find proper teaching materials, and organize instructional procedures to promote achievement in the three R's. When the satisfaction of pupil improvement in these skills is missing, teachers become increasingly frustrated with their work. Third, administrators must strive to aid teachers with discipline problems and reduce the number of days teachers are driven to the brink of nervous exhaustion. Finally, teachers must be selected who have a basic sympathy for the CD child and a conviction that they must not reject him because of his cultural peculiarities. To place a prejudiced, reluctant, or inexperienced teacher in these classes makes it not only likely but desirable that he will seek reassignment. Finally, teacher education colleges have a responsibility to graduate students experienced with the CD child, understanding of his problems, and accepting of his nature.

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